

Date: 05/23/2007

Project Name: Turn-In-Poachers (TIP) “on-line” citizen reporting system

Requesting Agency: Iowa Dept of Natural Resources (DNR) – Law Enforcement Bureau

Project Point(s)-of-Contact: *Steve Dermand, Exec. Officer – Law Enforcement Bureau 281-4515*

Project Sponsor: *Iowa DNR – Law Enforcement Bureau Chief, Lowell Joslin, 281-5919*

Goal: To provide internet access to a reporting form/procedure as an additional reporting option to an already existing program (TIP), whereby a citizen can complete a written TIP (poachers) report online via the web and submit it electronically to the DNR TIP coordinator (Steve Dermand) for processing and follow-up by an investigating DNR field officer...while maintaining complete anonymity, if the citizen chooses to remain confidential.

Project Purpose: To develop an automated web-enabled system providing a confidential, online written format for citizens to report poaching incidents and other fish or wildlife crimes to the DNR Law Enforcement Bureau. This reporting option has been identified as a specific need, especially for those citizens who suffer from hearing loss or other impairments which make it impossible for them to report poaching incidents by telephone. The system will improve the citizen's ability to report incidents in a timelier manner, and improve response time in terms of investigations into the incident.

Background: TIP is a citizen response program which has been available in Iowa since 1985 through the use of a toll-free 800 number (1-800-532-2020) commonly referred to as the “TIP Hotline.” Over the course of 20+ years the TIP program in Iowa has recorded nearly 9,000 poaching cases provided by private citizens who witnessed or heard of crimes against the fish or wildlife resources in this state.

Poachers are thieves who steal our fish and wildlife resources. Concerned citizens, can take an active role in helping our department put these fish and wildlife thieves out of business. If you witness or even hear of poaching activity call the TIP HOTLINE (1-800/532-2020) and reporting it immediately.

The responsibility for the TIP program is shared by TIP Of Iowa, Inc. (a private organization) and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Law Enforcement Bureau.

TIP is an organized non-profit corporation with dedicated sportsmen and women from all over Iowa who serve as board members. Each board member represents a conservation organization from around the state, such as; Iowa Bow hunters Assoc., Izaak Walton chapters, Pheasants Forever chapters, Iowa Wildlife Federation, and others.

The department receives and records reports of fish or game violations through a toll-free telephone number (1-800/532-2020), routes the confidential information to DNR officers for investigation, and arranges reward payments to informants through the TIP board. In order for a TIP report/case to be eligible for a cash reward the investigating officer must have written at least one citation. A conviction is not necessary. The cash reward is provided by the TIP organization based on the investigation outcome by the DNR.

The DNR provides the TIP coordinator, the TIP "Hotline" (1-800/532-2020) telephone number and the investigating officers. The toll-free TIP number is monitored 24-hours a day for citizens to report information about crimes against fish or wildlife day or night. This proposed automated reporting option will enhance the DNR's responsiveness to incidents and enable our citizens to utilize the Internet for reporting poaching incidents.

Expected Results in this Project: We expect that by providing an automated on-line option that the citizen can utilize at the computer in their own home, the Law Enforcement Bureau will receive more/additional poaching reports which may not have been reported without the availability of this optional on-line and confidential reporting procedure.

Request: *(include dollar amount and description of what will be purchased - i.e. services, hardware, software)* we expect that some service costs may be necessary. However we anticipate no additional hardware needs or special software packages. This request is for \$25,000 for Phase I, Scope Analysis. The DNR will request additional funding for the Design and Implementation phases in the future as the process allows.

Resources Being Contributed: *(people or funds being contributed to the project by the sponsoring agency- include role/% of time or amount in dollars)* Steve Dermand's time involvement as project coordinator. No specifically identified dollar amounts for other costs have been determined..

Interested Parties: Benefits to: General public/People of the State of Iowa, conservation organizations from around the state, such as; Iowa Bow hunters Assoc., Izaak Walton chapters, Pheasants Forever chapters, Iowa Wildlife Federation, and others. The TIP organization and Department of Natural Resources.

Recipients of this Service: General public/People of the State of Iowa, plus those mentioned in the Interested Parties Section.
